RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday, the 3rd May, 1995/13th Vaisakha 1917 (Saka)

The House met at Eleven of the clock **Mr. Chairman** in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Pipeline Network to carry gas from Assam

*401. SHRI JANARDAN YADAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state whether Government are exploring the possibilities of establishing a pipeline network to bring natural gas, which is being flared in various oil and gas fields in Assam, to Bihar and other major urban centres in eastern India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): The gas projected to be available in Assam is fully allocated to projects within Assam. There is no proposal to transport gas out of Assam. Flaring of gas in Assam is expected to be reduced to the technically minimum level with the commissioning of certain new projects in the near future.

श्री जनार्दन यादव : माननीय सभापति जी, जो उत्तर मुझे मिला है यह बहुत अस्पष्ट है। मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि असाम में गैस निकलने की कितनी संभावनाएं है और गैस निकालने की जो परियोजना है उसकी शक्ति क्या है तथा वर्तमान में कितनी गैस निकल रही है ? आसाम में जो गैस की खपत की परियोजनाएं बनी हुई हैं उनकी आवश्यकता कितनी है ? बी – बिहार के चम्पारन, भैंसालोटन और जयनगर में गैस निकलने की संभावना थी, उसका सर्वेक्षण हुआ था तो भैंसालोटन और जयनगर में सर्वेक्षण के बाद अभी तक गैस निकालने की क्या प्रक्रिया शुरू हुई है ?

CAPT. SATISH SHARMA: Sir, regarding part (a) of the question, the total production from Assam ONGC and all the other places in India, when combined together is 5.23 million standard cubic metres a day. The sale is 2.38 MSCMD, internal use is 1.33 MSCMD and the flaring of gas is 1.52 million standard cubic metres a day. This will come down when the new projects, as I mentioned earlier, comes on stream. The North-East Electric Power Corporation, NEEPCO, has been commissioned and that will come in full stream by the end of this year. The NEEPCO will lift 0.52 MSCMD. The Assam State Electricity Board's Phase II at Lakwa, which is under commissioning, is a power plant that will lift 0.4 MCMD. The GAIL is setting up an LPG plant at Lakwa and they will be uplifting 0.2 MCMD. As I mentioned earlier, with these new projects that are coming up, there will be no more flaring of gas in Assam. Part (b) of the question is regarding Bihar. The hon. Member has mentioned the prospects of finding gas in Bihar in the Champaran and Jainagar regions. We have carried out many surveys and exploration work is going on for many years and is still being continued. There are no prospects of finding natural gas in Bihar. But Bihar certainly has tremendous scope for coal-bed methane. I understand that the Coal Ministry is on the job. They are looking at the prospectus of finding coal-bed methane which is enormous.

श्री जनार्दन यादव : दूसरा मेरा प्रश्न है कि पूर्वोत्तर राज्यों में जिनके साथ बिहार भी हैं—जो आर्थिक दृष्टि से, उद्योग की दृष्टि से पिछड़े हैं, इनके विकास के लिए आप आसाम और दुनिया के अन्य देशों से गैस मांग रहे हैं उसके आधार पर कोई प्रोजेक्ट या परियोजना बनाने का विचार रखते हैं या नहीं ?

CAPT. SATISH SHARMA: Sir, let me start with the North-East. In Assam, the price of gas which is being charged, is only 1/3rd of what we are charging in the rest of the country. This is with the objective that we want investments there and we want industrialisation of that area. That is why such a great incentive has been given.

As far as Bihar is concerned, let me assure the hon. Member that there is tremendous scope to have coal-bed Methane coming out from there. I am

taking personal interest in it and in the near future I also plan to coordinate with the Coal Ministry and the other Departments, concerned, to see as to how we can progress in that area, because if that comes about, it will be of great benefit to the State of Bihar.

श्री जनार्दन यादव : माननीय मंत्री जी भैसालोटन के बारे में मैंने पूछा था कि वहां जो नेचरल गैस निकलने की संभावना है और आपका सर्वेक्षण हुआ है, उस पर आप सर्वेक्षण के बाद कोई काम ही नहीं कर रहे हैं । मुझे जैसा जानकारी है कि सिर्फ पांच वृक्ष उस पर हैं, वृक्ष नहीं कटने के चलते उस योजना पर काम नहीं शुरू हुआ । बिहार में चंपारण में भैसालोटन में जो आपकी सर्वेक्षण रिपोर्ट है उस पर काम शुरू करना था । सिर्फ 5-7 सबुआ के गांठ हैं जिसके नहीं काटे जाने के कारण उस पर काम शुरू नहीं हुआ है, इसकी जानकारी तो दीजिए या बाद में भी भेज दीजिए ?

CAPT. SATISH SHARMA: Sir, the question does not relate to exploration. Anyhow, so far as the specific query of the hon. Member about the five trees and the specific location of exploration is concerned, I will enquire into it and pass on the information. But I can assure the hon. Member that we have not stopped the exploration effort in Bihar. The survey work is going on in parts of Bihar and that is not being stopped. For the specific query that he has made, I will give him the details.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Chairman, Sir, about three or four months ago, the hon. Minister had stated on the floor of the House that the Government will see to it that there is zero flaring of gas throughout the country by 1996. In Assam, in spite of the fact that power projects are coming up there and the Gas Authority of India is setting up a plant for filling up of gas cylinders, more than 1/3rd of gas is being flared now. The Minister has given us the figure of 5.23 million standard cubic meters a day and in that, after all this, 1.52 million standard, cubic meters is going to be flared. So, even after all these projects, it is going to be only 1/3rd, which may be about 50 million cubic meters. The North-Eastern Region especially is starved of electricity and there the fuel-wood is being used for the purpose of cooking, etc. Therefore, I would like to know why they cannot have an ambitious programme for filling the gas cylinders for supply in the North-Eastern Region which is starved of fuel. I would also like to know from the Minister as to what he is going to do for the remaining 1/3rd of the gas that is being flared for the purpose of maximum utilisation of gas that is available in Assam.

CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA: Yes. I have said many times on the floor of this House that in 1996 flaring will come to a technical zero level. I had mentioned this specifically for the Western offshore. I am glad to inform the hon. Member that because of this multi-billion dollar gas flaring reduction project, which is under way for the Western offshore Bombay High area—with the completion of the HG Platform; the NQ Platform which is expected to be completed; ICB Hira Pipeline which is expected to be completed in July 1995; the Second Basin Hazira Trunk pipeline which is expected to be completed in July 1995;—the flaring has already come down to a technical zero level in the Western offshore except the Panna-Mukta fields which are yet to be developed. So, except the Tapti component which is yet to be developed and which is expected to be developed by 1997, in the Western offshore Bombay High area, the flaring has already come down to technical zero level.

The hon. Member mentioned about Assam. I do not know from where this figure, 1/3rd, has come. Let me assure the hon. Member that, as I mentioend earlier, the ONGC is setting up the necessary compression and transport facilities to connect the gas fields in Lakwa and these facilities

are expected to be completed by March 1997. The OIL is implementing the project for the underground storage of gas up to 0.8 MMSCMD by 1996, which we are doing for the first time in Assam. Besides, there are the other projects, as I mentioned earlier.

Sir, there will be no more flaring. Whatever flaring will be there in Assam, it will also be at a technical zero level.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Sir, at least he has given the figures in the discussion now. The figures are not there in the answer. Gas has a unit; but expectations don't have. Here, it is expected to be reduced to the technically minimum level. I would like to know whether a differentiation has been made between the technically minimum level and the zero flaring level. I it hasn't been done, then against the figure which you have just now given about 1.52 MSCMD gas being flared what is the technically minimum level that is being assumed? This is my first question.

My second question is this. By which year this so-called technically minimum level or what we accept as a zero flare level, will be achieved in Assam?

CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA: Sir, when we say technical level, it is because a flare has to be maintained as no unburnt gas can be ollowed to escape into the atmosphere. Certain flaring is required or the system.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: What is that?

CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA: That depends on many factors. As I mentioned to you earlier, some additional projects are coming up in Assm. I have mentioned the projects which are there. There is the flaring, as I mentioned, of 1.52. Out of that 1.52 flaring, the North-East Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO), which has just been commissioned, will uplift 0.52 MMSCMD... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: May I help you?

CAPT. SATISH SHARMA: Thank you very much. Sir, I can only thank him. The point I am making here is... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: What want is... (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Don't help now. Please don't help the Minister.

CAPT. SATISH SHARMA: Let me explain to the hon. Member. The question which the hon. Member has asked is about the exact flaring which amounts to technical or minimum level of flaring. That depends on as to when these projects are going to come on stream and how much they are going to uplift. Those are the parameters. It also depends on the location where gas is produced and flared. There are many areas where you have isolated fields. This is the overall macro-picture. On a micro level, in Assam, in Arunachal Pradesh, in Tripura, in the North East, we have isolated fields, isolated fields which are too uneconomical. It is not that we are not doing anything about that. But I will mention that after I have answered the main question.

At this point, to say exactly as to what the technical level of flaring is or the minimum level is, is not possible, till the... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: You said that 1.52 is being flared. I am asking you as a layman. What is your target so far is technically minimum flaring is concerned? To which level do you want to bring it down? If you have that target, then only you can say as to how many projects are coming up and by what time you will achieve the zero level. Why don't you come speciic on that, from 1.52 to... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: He talked about the three projects and the remaining... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Yes. But what is the target of minimum flare

level? Is it coming to 0.5 or one lakh .... *(Interruptions)* Can you give an assurance that by 1996 or 1997, you can ...*(Interruptions)*.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister is answering now.

CAPT. SATISH SHARMA: Sir, I think I will go through the numbers again. May be he is good with the numbers. The numbers are as follows.

For Assam, the total production is 5.23 MMSCMD. Sale is 2.38. Internal use is 1.33. That comes to 3.71. Flaring is 1.52, which I have already mentioned. Out of this 1.52, the NEEPCO will uplift 1. 1.52 minus 1 leaves us with 0.52.

The Assam State Electricity Board will lift 0.4 and the GAIL which is setting up an LPG plant at Lakwa will lift 0.2 MSCMD. This is what we are doing. Historically, what has happened in Assam is that the gas was committed, what was being produced was committed, to the Assam State Electricity Board and some other companies out there which had not been uplifting. So, we have kept a higher diversity factor for Assam more than for the rest of the country—50 per cent diversity factor for Assam—while for the rest of the country it is only 20 per cent, which means we are allocating gas to more companies than actually we are going to produce so that even if some companies are not able to uplift the gas, the other companies on a fall-back can uplift the gas so that the scope of flaring remains not only technical, but also minimum—absolutely technical zero or zero or whatever other terminology that you want to use. That is our strategy.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : सभापति महोदय, आधा सवाल तो मेरा नारायण सामी जी कर चुके हैं । आपने, मंत्री जी ने अभी बताया कि किसी रसियन कंपनी से कोई कांटेक्ट हुआ है, तो मैं जानना चाहूंगा कि वह कंपनी कौनसी है, जो गैस को जलने से रोकने वाली है और वह कितने दिनों में काम पूरा करेंगे ? क्या यह परमानेंट अरेन्जमेंट है या अन्त में किसी इंडियन कंपनी को उनकी जगह रिप्लेस करने वाले हैं ? ....**(व्यवधान)**....मैंने ऐसा सुना, जब आप कागज देख रहे थे, नारायणसामी जी का उत्तर दे रहे थे । सर, क्वैश्चन मैं रिपीट कर रहा हूं । ..**(व्यवधान)** मंत्री जी, हिन्दी जानते हैं।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please repeat it.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : सर, मंत्री जी ने जब जबाब दिया नारायणसामी जी को, तो मैं समझा हूं कि आपने गैस जो जलाई जा रही है उसके संबंध में किसी रसियन कंपनी से कांटेक्ट किया है । अगर किया है तो नाम क्या है ? कितने दिन के लिए किया क्या है परमानेन्ट अरेन्जमेंट किया है ? और, क्या हम अपनी टेक्नीक से आग इंडियन कंपनी को या गवर्नमेंट स्वयं उसको रिप्लेस कर सकेगी ?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Did you mention about any Russian company?

CAPT. SATISH SHARMA: Sir, this is...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think he did not mention about any Russian company.

कैप्टन सतीश शर्मा : पता नहीं कहाँ से आपको यह रसियन कंपनी सुनाई दिया है । मैंने कोई रसियन कंपनी की बात नहीं की और न कोई किसी रसियन कंपनी की चर्चा हुई है नारायणसामी जी के साथ । यहां किसी रसियन कंपनी का कोई जिक्र नहीं आया ।

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is obviously a misunderstanding. He did not mention about any Russian company.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : अगर नहीं किया है, तो सवाल निकलता है कि जब

उसके लिए आप क्या करने वाले हैं ? मेरी जानकारी यह है कि किसी फारेन कंपनी से आपने कांटेक्ट किया है । जो गैस जलाई जा रही है, उसका उपयोग करने के लिए आप क्या करेंगे ?

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is an unanswerable question. Please briefly say something so that I can pass on to the next question because too much technical discussions are there.

CAPT. SATISH SHARMA: Sir, as I had mentioned earlier, the flaring of gas in the Bombay High is already down to technical zero level because of the multi-billion dollar project - three billion dollar project, which had been underway and which has been completed on time. We were discussing about Assam just now. About other areas also I would like to inform the hon. Member. In Gujarat, the flaring in North Gujarat is down to technical zero level, the necessary compression facilities are being set-up in South Gujarat to reduce the flaring to technical level by May, 1996. A number of consumers have been identified for utilisation of gas from isolated pools. In Tripura, there is no flaring of gas, only free gas is being produced. In K.G. Basin, the flaring at Ravva off-shore field will continue till July, 1996, when the required facilities for utilisation of gas are likely to be set up. In the Cauvery Basin, at present, most of the gas...I am giving an overall picture.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that is enough.

CAPT. SATISH SHARMA: All right, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Question Number 402, as there has been too much of gas!

*402. [*The Questioner (Shri Anantray Devshanker Dave) was absent. For answer vide col.....infra.*]

व्यापारिक प्रतिष्ठानों द्वारा रसोई गैस सिलेंडरों का उपयोग किया जाना

*403. **श्री आरू मोहम्मद** : क्या पट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार को इस बात की जानकारी है कि घरेलू कार्यों में प्रयुक्त किये जाने वाले रसोई गैस सिलेंडरों का व्यापारिक प्रतिष्ठानों द्वारा उपयोग किया है जा रहा है ;

(ख) क्या सरकार इस भ्रष्ट प्रक्रिया को रोकने हेतू कठोर कार्यवाही करने का विचार रखता है ;

(ग) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है ; और

(घ) यदि नहीं, तो इसके क्या कारण है ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA): (a) to (d) Reports of domestic cylinders finding way for use by unauthorised customers including business establishments are sometimes received. In established cases, suitable action under the marketing discipline guidelines, which have been made more stringent recently, as well as under the LPG Control Order, is taken. Oil Companies occasionally conduct raids on unauthorised users and confiscate the cylinders, etc., and initiate action under LPG Control Order. Action such as imposition of fine, warning, suspension and even termination is taken against errant distributors.

श्री आरू मोहम्मद : सभापति महोदय मेरे सवाल का कतई यह मकसद नहीं है कि मैं गैस सिलेंडरों की अनियमितता के मामले में मिनिस्ट्री से लम्बा-चौड़ा डाटा हासिल